

LA-UR-21-26330

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Title: 76th anniversary of Trinity test Dawn of the Atomic Age commemorated with new stories, plus printable posters

Author(s): Steeves, Brye Ann

Intended for: Web

Issued: 2021-07-06

Disclaimer:

Los Alamos National Laboratory, an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, is operated by Triad National Security, LLC for the National Nuclear Security Administration of U.S. Department of Energy under contract 89233218CNA000001. By approving this article, the publisher recognizes that the U.S. Government retains nonexclusive, royalty-free license to publish or reproduce the published form of this contribution, or to allow others to do so, for U.S. Government purposes. Los Alamos National Laboratory requests that the publisher identify this article as work performed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Energy. Los Alamos National Laboratory strongly supports academic freedom and a researcher's right to publish; as an institution, however, the Laboratory does not endorse the viewpoint of a publication or guarantee its technical correctness.



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iS3THFlfxNbsyCuaxrVlqc818jttMN/view?usp=sharing>

With a brilliant flash of light and thunderous boom, the Trinity test cloud rose 38,000 feet into the sky, igniting the Nuclear Age. (Photograph by physicist Jack Aeby.)

76th anniversary of Trinity test

Dawn of the Atomic Age commemorated with new stories, plus printable posters

By the [National Security Research Center](#) staff

In the early morning hours 76 years ago, Los Alamos scientists, engineers, and staff successfully detonated The Gadget — a plutonium, implosion-type nuclear weapon — in the New Mexico desert during the Trinity Test on July 16, 1945.

Learn more about how our Lab changed the world forever:

News stories:

- How The Gadget got its name.
- How our first Director J. Robert Oppenheimer's nuclear weapons work was inspired by literature, plus his long-misinterpreted quote about the Trinity Test is explained.

Online:

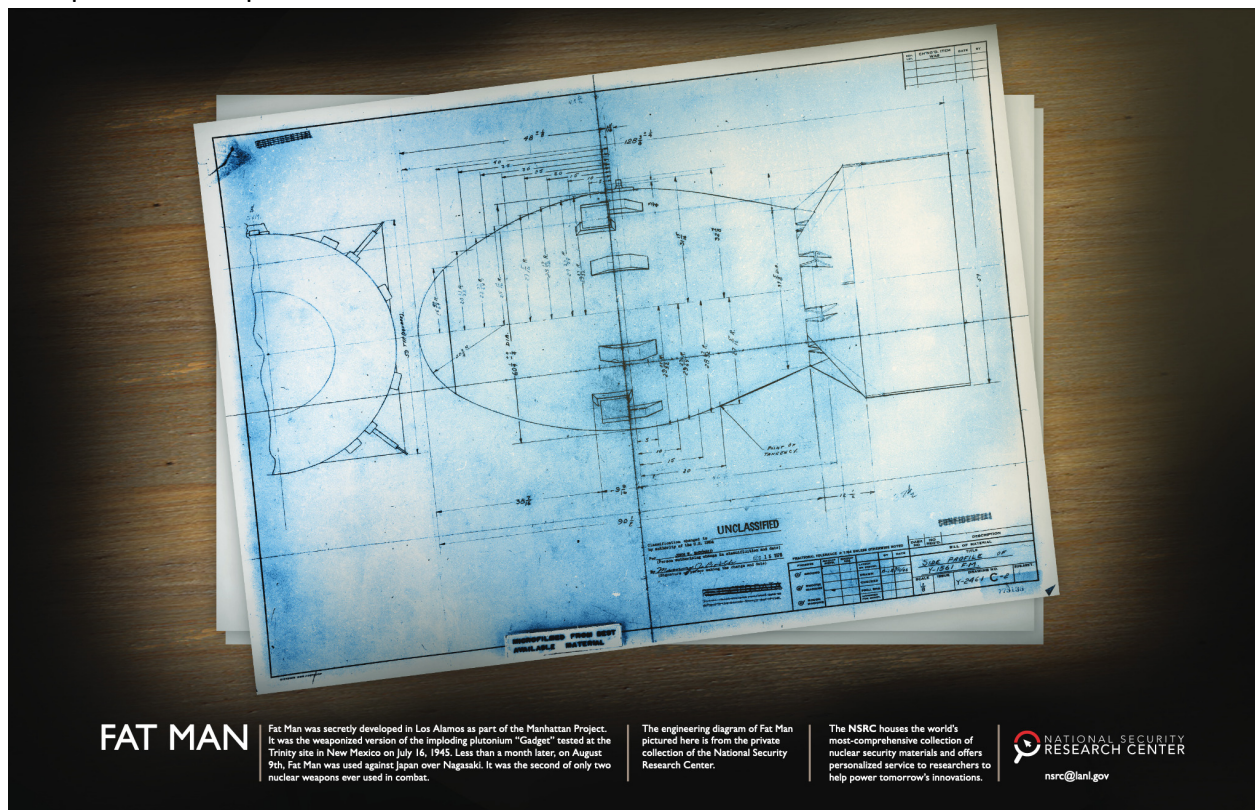
Visit the [Trinity site](#)—not necessarily the one located in the Jornada del Muerto desert, but LANL's website, packed with photos, videos, stories, and more to commemorate the anniversary.

Printable posters:

The NSRC has created five original posters that are approved to be downloaded, printed and displayed. The posters include illustrations and information about:

[The Fat Man](#)

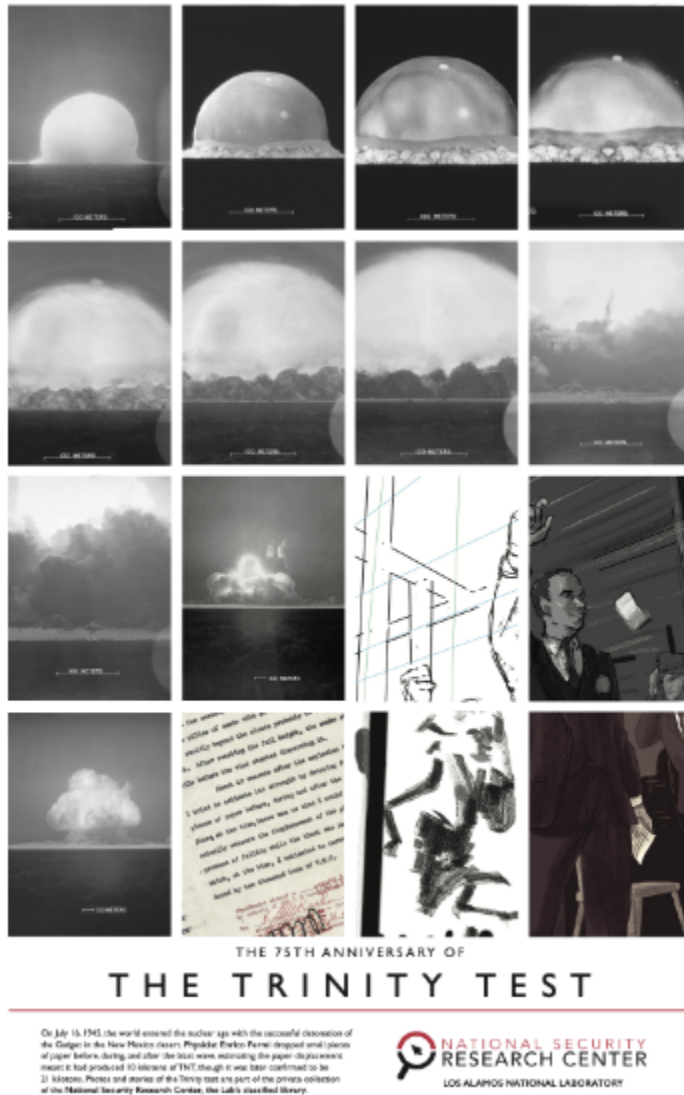
The Trinity Test's successful detonation of the Gadget atomic bomb was a precursor to the Fat Man plutonium implosion bomb used in World War II.



https://int.lanl.gov/trinity/_assets/FatMan_Poster_Web.pdf

[The Trinity Test](#)

This poster commemorates the Trinity Test's 75th anniversary.



<https://int.lanl.gov/trinity/assets/the-trinity-test.pdf>

[The Trinity Test: Fermi edition](#)

This poster features Los Alamos physicist and Nobel laureate Enrico Fermi.



<https://int.lanl.gov/trinity/assets/Enrico%20Fermi.pdf>

[Trinity Scientific Firsts](#)

This poster describes a number of innovations emerging from the Trinity Test.



<https://int.lanl.gov/trinity/assets/trinity-firsts-poster.pdf>

Trinity Reactions

How did witnesses react to the Trinity test? Some reactions are profound, and some may make you laugh.



"We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed, a few people cried, most people were silent."

— J. Robert Oppenheimer,
Lab director and physicist

"We were struck by an even stronger feeling that the faith of those who had been responsible for the initiation and the carrying on of this Herculean project had been justified."

— Gen. Leslie Groves,
leader of the Manhattan Project

"Some people claim to have wondered at the time about the future of mankind. I didn't. We were at war, and the damned thing worked."

— Norris Bradbury,
physicist

"I am sure that all who witnessed this test went away with a profound feeling that they had seen one of the great events of history."

— Edwin McMillan,
physicist

"Although I had lived through this moment in my imagination many times during the past few years and everything happened almost as I had pictured it, the reality was shattering."

— James Chadwick,
head of the British delegation to the
Manhattan Project in Los Alamos

"I am about the only guy who actually looked at the damn thing."

— Richard Feynman,
physicist, who witnessed the Trinity test without wearing the safety glasses he was given

"The spectacle was tremendous, beautiful, magnificent, terrifying, exciting, humbling, scary."

— Marjorie Bradner,
secretary at the
Los Alamos Lab

"No one who saw it could forget it, a foul and awesome display."

— Kenneth Bainbridge,
Trinity test director

"Oppie, you owe me \$10."


— George Kistiakowsky,
physical chemist, who wagered a month of his salary against Oppenheimer's \$10 that the Gadget would work

TRINITY REACTIONS

nsrc@lanl.gov

A few hundred scientists, engineers and soldiers gathered in the New Mexico desert during the early morning hours of July 16, 1945. It was the culmination of years of work at the secret lab in Los Alamos led by J. Robert Oppenheimer.

The Trinity test was the world's first detonation of a nuclear weapon. Ranging from vividly descriptive to deeply profound to a little comical, those who witnessed this scientific achievement had their own impressions of what they had just seen.

 **NATIONAL SECURITY
RESEARCH CENTER**
LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY

https://int.lanl.gov/trinity/_assets/WRS-SIS_NSRCTrinReac11x17LAUR2027643.pdf

Have questions? Need research assistance?

Contact the National Security Research Center at nsrc@lanl.gov, or visit nsrc.lanl.gov.